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| **BEST PRACTICE IN TEACHING READING** | |
| **Increase** | **Decrease** |
| Reading aloud to students |  |
| Time for independent reading | Exclusive stress on whole class or reading-group activities |
| Student’s choice of their own reading materials | Teacher selection of all reading materials for individuals and groups |
| Exposing children to a wide and rich range of literature | Relying on selections in text |
| Teacher modeling and discussing his/her own reading processes | Teacher keeping her/his own reading tastes and habits private |
| Primary instruction emphasis on comprehension | Primary instructional emphasis on reading sub skills such as phonics, word analysis, syllabication |
| Teaching reading as a process:   * Use strategies that activate prior knowledge * Help students make and test predictions * Structure help during reading * Provide after-reading applications | Teaching reading as a single, one-step act |
| Social, collaborative activities with much discussion and interaction | Solitary seat work |
| Grouping by interests or book choices | Grouping by reading level |
| Silent reading followed by discussion | Round-robin oral reading |
| Teaching skills in the context of whole and meaningful literature | Teaching isolated skills in phonics workbooks or drills |
| Writing before and after reading | Little or no chance to write |
| Encouraging invented spelling in student’s early writings | Punishing pre-conventional spelling in students’ early writings |
| Use of reading in content fields (e.g., historical novels in social studies) | Segregation of reading to reading time |
| Evaluation that focuses on holistic, higher-order thinking processes | Evaluation focused on individual, low-level sub skills |
| Measuring success of reading program by student’s reading habits, attitudes, and comprehension | Measuring the success of the reading program only by test scores |

Adapted from Zemelman, S., Daniels, H. and Hyde, A. *Best Practice: New Standards for Teaching and Learning in America’s Schools*, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Heineman, 1993.

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| **BEST PRACTICE IN TEACHING WRITING** | |
| **Increase** | **Decrease** |
| Student ownership and responsibility by:   * helping students choose their own topics and goals for improvement * using brief teacher-student conferences * teaching students to review their own progress | Teacher control of decision-making by:   * teacher deciding on all writing topics * suggestions for improvements dictated by teacher * learning objectives determined by teacher alone * instruction given as whole-class activity |
| Class time spent on writing whole, original pieces, through:   * establishing real purposes for writing, and students’ involvement in the task * instruction in, and support for, all stages of writing process * pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing | Class time spent on isolated sub skills through:   * drills on grammar, vocabulary, spelling, paragraphing, penmanship, etc. * writing assignments given briefly, with no context or purpose, completed in one step |
| Teacher modeling writing - drafting, revision, sharing - as a fellow author, and as demonstrator of processes | Teacher talks about writing but never writes or shares own work |
| Learning or grammar and mechanics in context, at the editing stage, and as items are needed | Isolated grammar lessons, given in order determined by textbook, before writing is begun |
| Writing for real audiences, publishing for the class and for wider communities | Assignments read only by teacher |
| Making the classroom a supportive setting for shared learning, using   * active exchange and valuing of student’s ideas * collaborative small group work * conferences and peer critiquing that give responsibility for improvement to authors | Devaluation of students’ ideas through:   * students viewed as lacking knowledge and language abilities * sense of class as competing individuals * work with fellow students viewed as cheating, disruptive |
| Writing across the curriculum as a tool for learning | Writing taught only during “language arts” period - i.e., infrequently |
| Constructive and efficient evaluation that involves:   * brief informal oral responses as students work * thorough grading of just a few of student-selected, polished pieces * focus on a few errors at a time * cumulative view of growth and self-evaluation * encouragement of risk taking and honest expression | Evaluation as negative burden for teacher and student by:   * marking all papers heavily for all errors, making teacher a bottleneck * teacher editing paper, and only after completed, rather than student making improvements * grading seen as punitive, focused on errors, not growth |